

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE

Virtual Meeting via Zoom video-conference
Tuesday 11th August 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Bowden, Buller, Forward, Thomas and Sharp who was in the Chair.
Ex Officio: Chairman Riordan
Parish Clerk: Miss Nicola Ideson

APOLOGIES: There were no apologies.

APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES: Minute Pages 1492P-1495P of 21st July 2020 were approved, to be signed by Councillor Sharp and made available at <http://www.staplehurst-pc.uk/community/staplehurst-parish-council-13607/planning-committee/>.

URGENT ITEMS – there were no urgent items.

COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS:

1. Declarations of Lobbying – Councillors Buller and Riordan, declared they had been lobbied about application 20/503527. Councillors Buller, Forward, Riordan and Bowden declared that they had been lobbied about the applications relating to River Farm. Councillor Buller declared she had been lobbied about The Oast House Ely Court. All Councillors declared they had been lobbied about application 20/502030.
2. Declarations of Changes to the Register of Interests – none declared.
3. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda – Councillor Thomas declared she lived in close proximity to application 20/503230. It was agreed that this was not a material interest. Councillor Riordan declared an interest in the River Farm applications as they had, along with other organisations, donated produce to the Staplehurst Emergency Help Team during the COVID-19 lockdown period.
4. Requests for Dispensation – Councillor Riordan requested dispensation and this was granted.

APPEALS LODGED: (for comment or noting)

19/503527 **Penryn, Station Road, TN12 0PY** - Demolition of existing chalet bungalow, detached garage & shed. Erection of 4no. dwellings with creation of new access & associated parking. REVISED DESCRIPTION Rec'd 28.10.19 Outline application for demolition of existing chalet bungalow, detached garage and shed. Erection of 4no. dwellings with creation of new access and associated parking. Matters relating to access, layout, appearance, landscaping and scale reserved for future consideration. MBC REFUSED. SPC refused (Min 1450P 1461P). Any additional comments or withdrawal/modification of previous comments must be submitted in writing to the Planning Inspectorate by 1 September 2020. Councillors RESOLVED to make additional comments: -
Firstly, this prestigious bungalow adds character and visual amenity to the street scene of Station Road Replacing the bungalow with 4 modern dwellings will cause considerable visual harm to the street scene. The bungalow has its own setting with beautiful soft landscaping which helps local bio-diversity and surface-water dispersal. These houses are becoming very rare in our parish, especially in the built-up area.
Nearly one thousand new homes are being built in Staplehurst so there is plenty of choice for the type of housing being applied for on the Penryn site. To replace Penryn with more of such similar dwellings makes no sense. Maidstone Borough Council has its five-year housing supply and so does not need this windfall site.

The appeal statement also likens this site to the approved permission for the Homeleigh Timber site, further south along Station Road. There is no comparison between the two applications. The Homeleigh site is mainly 'brown-field' with all buildings in a poor condition. The sawmill and shop create noise and pollution as well as an enormous number of traffic manoeuvres which cause chaos in Station Road, especially as it is located very close to the traffic lights at the nearby crossroads. The Parish Council opposed the Homeleigh application, but it did acknowledge that building houses here would be a planning gain and greatly improve highway safety. The Penryn site is directly opposite the Free Church which already has issues with access from the A229 as parking for the Free Church accumulates along the road.

Penryn however, is a bungalow in excellent condition set in beautiful grounds.

Staplehurst Parish Council has provided photographs of the extreme flooding which occurs. Councillors are deeply concerned that tree works have already commenced. This site will be very cramped with 4 new dwellings, all with parking spaces instead of gardens.

The Parish Council opposes this application in the strongest possible terms. This application goes against policies DM12 and DM1 of the Local Plan, and against H1 and H2 of the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan.

FULL PLANNING APPLICATIONS: (for recommendation)

- 20/502726 **37 Surrenden Road TN12 0LY** - Erection of a single storey front, side and rear extension. RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer.
- 20/502812 **10 North Down TN12 0PG** - Extension of dormer over flat roof to enlarge one bedroom and allow access to a third via new corridor. (Resubmission of 19/503934) SPC had recommended Approval (Min 1450P). RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer.
- 20/502913 **Land Adjacent to Bridge House, Couchman Green Lane TN12 0RS** - Retrospective application for the stationing of a caravan and storage unit, extension of the access track and the erection of a summerhouse at land associated with Bridge House, Couchman Green Lane. RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer.
Councillors recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer. Councillors request that a condition relating to non-residential use of the caravan is applied to any given consent. The planning statement submitted by the applicant states 'There is no running water or electricity to the caravan nor is it used for residential purposes.' Councillors wish this to remain the same in the future.
- 20/503020 **Cross at Hand Garage, Maidstone Road TN12 0RH** - Change of use of land from car sales to hand car wash site, with the erection of gates, fencing and refuse area, placement of storage container and creation of surface water drainage and interceptor. RESOLVED: Recommend REFUSAL and referral to the MBC Planning Committee were the Planning Officer minded to approve the application

Councillors commented that this site has planning permission for housing already. Councillors are very concerned that we now have an application for a car wash on part of this site.

Councillors object strongly for the following reasons.

1. The site is located on the 60mph primary route, the A229, which has a poor accident record. The site is also opposite a junction, Chart Hill Road, which has many HGVs entering and exiting due to the close proximity of River Farm as well as plenty of other traffic. This site is also near to the Homeleigh Depot with all their associated traffic. A car wash by its very nature would have plenty of traffic movements in and out. Customers would exit from near the apex of the bend with very poor visibility splays to judge the speed of vehicles already using the A229.

2. A car wash is never attractive in design and so this would have a detrimental impact on the character and visual amenity of this rural area, as well as causing noise, pollution and lighting to the surrounding area. There are homes in close proximity to the application site.

3. Staplehurst has a car wash at the Station area which is within the built-up location and so is a much more suitable area. There are car-washing facilities at the southern end of Staplehurst at the petrol station site. Apparently, Millbrook Garden Centre which is just outside our parish boundary on the A229, just a little further to the north, now has permission for a car wash.

4. The application gives no detail of opening times.

5. This development is against Policy DM37 of the MBC Local Plan regarding expansion of existing businesses in rural areas. It fails this policy because the development does not integrate into the local landscape, it causes unacceptable traffic levels on nearby roads, causes unacceptable loss of amenity in the area and would impact on nearby properties and the view from the road.

This is a totally inappropriate development in this location.

20/503048
20/503049

The Oast House Ely Court, Goudhurst Road TN12 0HB - Change of use of redundant Oast House to 1no. three-bedroom dwelling, erection of a detached double garage with a bat maternity roost in loft and change of use of adjacent land to residential use. Listed Building Consent for internal and external works in connection with conversion of Oast House. RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer. Councillors raised concerns regarding the proposed insertion of windows on the first floor of the north elevation of the Oast conversion. These windows will overlook the two adjacent listed buildings, in particular Ely Court Coach House. When Ely Court applied for alterations to their property the applicant was not allowed to insert additional windows. Councillors also request that a condition to the effect that the asbestos roof on the Oast is dealt with safely, is applied to any given consent. It was noted that on the previous application the Conservation Officer stated that the proposed garage was too large and too close to the Oast. Councillors agree with this comment. Concerns were also raised that the large area of hardstanding, allocated for parking, will reduce surface water dispersal and decrease the amount of ecological land available.

20/503106

Eccleston House, Old Rectory Lane TN12 0AF - Erection of a single storey rear extension to existing annexe and raising of roof height to accommodate loft conversion, including new dormer windows and rooflights. RESOLVED: Recommend

APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer. Councillors recommended that the annexe be tied to the main property.

- 20/503147 **River Farm, Chart Hill Road TN12 ORW** - Full planning permission for the erection of extensions to the existing packhouse building, together with new internal access road, amendments to existing vehicular site access, hardstanding, acoustic fencing, landscaping and creation of an ecological enhancement area. RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer.
- 20/503148 **River Farm, Chart Hill Road TN12 ORW** - Full planning permission for the erection of an atmosphere-controlled storage building together with external hardstanding and new internal access road. RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning officer.
- 20/503155 **River Farm, Chart Hill Road TN12 ORW** - Change of use of land for the siting of 20 worker caravans together with the erection of a laundry and games room and associated access and car parking area. RESOLVED: Recommend REFUSAL to the MBC Planning Officer. Were the Planning Officer minded to approve the application Councillors commented that the development would mean between 40-60 additional people on site and feel that there is insufficient infrastructure to support this many people. The caravans and increase in hardstanding would be aesthetically displeasing and would impact on the effectiveness of surface water drainage. Councillors expressed the hope that job opportunities would be offered to people from the local area. This application contravenes policy DM34 of the Local Plan.
- 20/503230 **The Chase, Maidstone Road TN12 ORE** - Proposed render to front and rear elevations. Proposed single storey rear extension. RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to the MBC Planning Officer.

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

- 20/503098 **Providence Strict Baptist Chapel, Chapel Lane TN12 OAJ** - Listed Building consent for the re-construction of toilets together with roof and internal. RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to MBC Planning Officer.

NON-MATERIAL AMENDMENT

- 20/503301 **Woodford Farm, Maidstone Road TN12 ORH** - Non Material Amendment - The application relates to minor alterations to the plans included within condition which sought to amend the approved plans to ensure that a single story garage could be provided for plot 4 of the development subject to 15/506037/FULL (APP/U2235/W/16/3142747). RESOLVED: Recommend APPROVAL to MBC Planning Officer.

REPORTED DECISIONS: (for noting)

- 20/501766 **Cocklewood Yard, Five Oak Lane TN12 OHT** - (Existing) for existing use of buildings as storage and yard as haulage and maintenance base for in excess of 10 years, plus existing office building in situ for in excess of 5 years MBC GRANTED. SPC had recommended Approval (Min 1490P). NOTED by Councillors.
- 20/501856 **Oast House, Aydhurst Farm, Marden Road TN12 OPD** - TPO Application to cut back branch of 1 x Tree 2m overhanging into garden from Oast House farm as excessive shading damaging the grass and tree planted in our garden and cut back one branch off 1 x tree hanging over shed MBC WITHDRAWN. SPC had recommended Refusal (Min 1486P). NOTED by Councillors.
- 20/501964 **GMS & DK Holdings Site at Station Approach TN12 OQN** - pursuant to conditions 2 (details of materials), 13 (contamination remediation works), 14 (details of foul and surface water drainage), 16 (landscaping scheme), 18 (details of cycle storage facilities), 22 (boundary treatments), 23 (existing site levels and proposed slab levels), of application 11/1944 MBC SPLIT DECISION; PART A APPROVED (Conditions 2, 14, 18, 22 & 23) PART B REFUSED (Conditions 13 & 16). SPC had Noted (Min 1488P). NOTED by Councillors.
- 20/502159 **Holt Lea, Station Road TN12 OQG** - Erection of single storey rear extension with part flat, part pitched roof, insertion of rooflights and flue. MBC GRANTED with 3 conditions. SPC had recommended Approval (Min 1487P). NOTED by Councillors.
- 20/502259 **Chickenden Oast, Chickenden Lane TN12 ODP** - for proposed change of use of agricultural building to 1no. dwelling house and associated operation development previous application PN/16/508680 Withdrawn MBC REFUSED. SPC had recommended Approval (Min 1490P). NOTED by Councillors.
- 20/502267 **24 Hurst Close TN12 OBX** - Demolition of conservatory and erection of single storey rear flat roof extension, insertion of rooflights and internal alterations MBC GRANTED with 3 conditions. SPC had recommended Approval (Min 1488P). NOTED by Councillors.

Chairman.....

PUBLIC FORUM – Four members of the public attended. One commented on the River Farm applications and one other commented on 20/503020

Proceedings ended at 8.25pm.